

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:
Joy Fong, President
Lanny Fausett, Vice President
Bill Curtis, Secretary
Tony Barnes
Terry Roe

OMAHA SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Drawer 480
Omaha, Arkansas 72662-0480
Telephone:
(501) 426-3366

RECEIVED
EPA REGION VI

1991 MAR 21 PM 5:18

SUPERFUND BRANCH

Dr. David E. Land
Superintendent

Randy Center
Secondary Principal

John L. Barron
Elementary Principal

March 19, 1991

Congressman John Paul Hammerschmidt
2207 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Congressman Hammerschmidt:

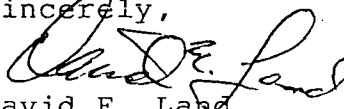
I have enclosed an article from the Arkansas Democrat dated Tuesday, March 12, 1991, concerning the neutralizing of PCB's.

Again, as I have written to you previously, I have a great deal of concern, as do many people in the Omaha area about the Environmental Protection Agency's decision to incinerate the contaminants at the Arkwood site. There should be some consideration given to alternative methods like the one described in the article. At least we should investigate such possibilities before deciding incineration is the only choice.

I have been told more than once that when the EPA decides that incineration is the method to use, there will be no change in their mind, even when better methods are discovered. If this be the case, something is definitely wrong with the system.

I hope you will continue to monitor this situation.

Sincerely,

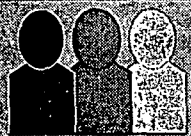

David E. Land
Superintendent

DEL:dd

cc: Brent Truskowski
Remedial Project Manager
U. S. E. P. A. (6H-EA)
1445 Ross Avenue
Dallas, TX 75202-2733

9421599





Newsmakers

✓ **President Vytautas Landsbergis** of Lithuania received in Vilnius a \$475,000 peace prize from the Norwegian public Monday, the first anniversary of the Baltic republic's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union, whose president, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, last year received Norway's Nobel Peace Prize, and Landsbergis said he would donate the money to children's homes, invalids, education and the support of cultural figures.

✓ **Gennady Gerasimov**, 58, who as chief spokesman of the Soviet Foreign Ministry introduced Western-style news conferences and was a leading spokesman for the glasnost reforms, arrived Monday in Lisbon to assume new duties as ambassador to Portugal.

✓ **Walter Thomas Taylor Jr.**, 24, convicted Feb. 8 of killing Paula Smits, 21, and her 3-year-old daughter Amanda with a hammer on Aug. 8, 1987, despite claims that the former sailor was driven insane by the 1987 Iraqi missile attack on the USS Stark, was sentenced Monday in Jacksonville, Fla., Circuit Court to life in prison with parole possible after 50 years.

✓ **Richard Berendzen**, who

The Associated Press

CHICAGO — In an accidental discovery that could help clean up a vexing environmental problem, federal workers have found that lime appears to be an inexpensive and effective way to destroy PCBs.

Tests are still being done to determine the effects of using lime, used in making steel, sewage treatment and acid neutralization. But initial results are promising, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency official said Monday.

"The PCB problem in this country is a major problem and consequently this could be a very significant finding," said Robin J. Robinson, executive vice president of Clean Sites, a Virginia-based non-profit group that helps clean up hazardous waste sites.

PCBs, polychlorinated biphenyls, are a family of heat-resistant chemicals used as coolants in older electrical equipment but suspected of causing cancer and birth defects. Their manufacture has been banned in this country since 1977.

But until the EPA finding, they have been extremely difficult and costly to destroy.

"It comes as a surprise to everybody because everybody has assumed all along that the stuff is very, very intractable," said Matthew Zabik, associate director of the Pesticide Research Center at Michigan State University in East Lansing, Mich.

EPA workers stumbled upon the discovery while cleaning up PCB-contaminated sites in Indiana and Ohio in the late 1980s, said Robert

Bowden, chief of the agency's emergency response branch in Chicago.

Material containing lime was used to solidify PCB-contaminated sludge in lagoons at both sites to make the material easier to remove, Bowden said.

When EPA workers returned to the sites several months later to remove the sludge, "We discovered that PCBs were no longer there," Bowden said.

At the Cam-Or oil reclamation site in Westville, Ind., one lagoon once contained high levels of PCBs. In mid-1988, about eight months after using the lime treatment there, EPA workers found no trace of PCBs, Bowden said.

Bowden said the same thing happened at a PCB-contaminated lagoon near Fremont, Ohio.

An independent chemist in Missouri ran tests to try to mimic the process, and he appears to have documented a very significant reaction which results in the destruction of PCB compounds, Bowden said.

The lime material contained trace elements of metals that EPA officials believe acted as catalysts that aided the reaction. Tests found pure lime alone did not break down PCBs, Bowden said.

Researchers are conducting further tests at the EPA's Cincinnati lab and at the abandoned Conservation Chemical Co. site in Hammond, Ind., where they've had "enormous success," Bowden said.

"I'm 99 percent convinced that it works," he said.

The process is 10 times cheaper than incineration, the

most common method of PCB disposal, and more environmentally safe, Bowden said. Incineration can cost up to \$600 per ton, compared with \$50 to \$75 for the lime process, Bowden said.

Lime is not toxic and has been used to add calcium to farming soil, Zabik noted.

More tests results are expected by the end of April.

He said the process also is believed to work with other toxic wastes, such as dioxins and pesticides.

Zabik said the lime process might be difficult to use in large bodies of water, such as the Great Lakes, where PCB contamination has been found. And he questioned whether it would work in contaminated soil where PCBs are widespread and not concentrated in one place.



Card-carrying Bush authenticates identity for suspicious pupil

The Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Va. — President Bush pulled out his driver's license and a credit card Monday to prove his iden-

He fished out a picture of a grandson playing baseball and a snapshot of a granddaughter.

"How about, do you accept American Express cards?"